

**Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary  
Advisory Council**

**- February 21, 2012 Meeting Minutes-**

**Date:** February 21, 2012

**Time:** 6:30pm

**Location:** Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center, 500 W. Fletcher Street, Alpena, MI

**MEETING ATTENDEES**

**NOAA:** Daniel J. Basta, Director ONMS, Jeff Gray, Jean Bauer, Meaghan Black, Tane Casserley, Russ Green, Cathy Green, Phil Hartmeyer, Joey Jackson, Harriet Smith, Chuck Bennett, Ellen Brody, Sarah Waters, Stephanie Gandulla, Daniel Moffat, Patrick Saker, Pat Labadie

**State of Michigan:** Wayne Lusardi

**SAC Members:** Vera Kavanaugh, Deb Pardike, Mark Upham, Don Beem, Lynda VanDusen, Jeff Kowalski, Joe Sobczak, Kathleen Hubbard, Steve Kroll, Carl Bourdelais, Olin Joynton

**SAC Alternates:** Jim Dessenberg, Jerry Meek, Chuck Wiesen, Cam Habermahl, Dennis Bodem, John McConnell

**Ex-officio Member:** None

**Public:** Carol Shafto, Barbara Meek, David Cummins, ACC

**Media:** Jessica Nikolich, *The Alpena News*

**WELCOME AND ACTION ITEMS**

Olin called the meeting to order and introduced Dan Basta, director of the ONMS. He also introduced the new member Cam Habermahl, alternate for Alpena County.

Dennise Bodem made a motion to approve the October 2011 meeting minutes. Chuck Wiesen seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Jean provided the council with a list of seats that are up for application. The seats are:

- Fishing
- Tourism
- Maritime History & Interpretation
- Diving
- Education (K-12)
- Citizen-at-Large (currently held by Jerry Meek and John McVeety)

Applications will be ready soon and will be due by the end of March.

**Assessing the Role of Scientific Information in SAC Recommendations & NMS Management Decisions Survey – Dan Basta, ONMS Director**

This is a 20-minute survey being done by PhD candidate Lauren E. Garske. All staff and SAC members have been asked to participate in this survey. Dan has recommended that everyone completes the survey.

**FRIENDS OF THUNDER BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY – Meaghan Black**

Membership drive has been in full swing since October. Working on wrapping up the drive, just about doubled the amount of members from last year. Also have had a great show from the staff and the Friends Board.

The store did very well this year and the online store is up and running.

**Thunder Thursday – Meaghan Black**

Meaghan gave a presentation on the Friends at Rotary on February 20<sup>th</sup>. Her message to them was that the Friends group was trying to think outside the box and raise money creatively without having to go door-to-door. Thunder Thursday is done in 2 ways. Either a private party at the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center with a “sneak peak” of updates, or it is a public event. To date, the public events have been held at the Black Sheep. These events are designed to promote the Friends group, as well as discuss items the people in attendance probably don’t know. The events at the Black Sheep have been reaching out to a different demographic and include discounts on beverages if you purchase a sanctuary glass, selling of sanctuary merchandise, and sanctuary trivia throughout the evening.

Jeff Gray – The Friends have received donations from 100% of the staff. Jeff presented at the annual LT meeting regarding our Friends group and shared a lot of our ideas. 100% of the superintendents from the entire program are also members of our Friends group.

The Friends Board consists of Chuck Wiesen, Carol Shafto, and Missy LeFave.

Dan Basta said he was impressed by our membership. It is the key to connecting and creating ownership. It encourages us to continue to build up our memberships at all levels (youth, international, etc.) National program is also trying to re-do their membership drive. Friends group is part of Thunder Bay’s secret weapon.

**SANCTUARY EXPANSION UPDATE – Jeff Gray**

During the 2005 five-year review, the number one thing we heard about was expansion of the sanctuary boundaries. Same thing when we worked on management plan review during public hearings. Senator Levin has made four attempts to expand the sanctuary; the bill has not moved through, but has come very close. Moving forward with Congressional action has not been able to happen. Recently received a letters of support from the Governor’s office, Dept. of Commerce, local economic groups, etc.

Jeff said that the program has made the decision to move on administratively. Process somewhat similar to Management Plan, which will include public hearings, an environmental impact statement, etc.

Dan Basta - mentioned that we are not the only site that has had this problem with bills in Congress not getting through. You want to go that route because the NMS Act has not been reauthorized. Congressional decisions can be quick and unquestioned. This has not happened. Government is only as good as the people it governs. Good government is created by us, the people it governs, if government is not delivering for us, we need to deliver it for ourselves. May want to expand the size we had originally proposed.

According to Dan Basta, "We need to go forward for ourselves, but also for Senator Carl Levin. We have made a programmatic decision that we are going to move forward with this. We owe it to you. We will need all of your support for this and we are excited to get going on this challenge."

Carol Shafto asked Dan what he would like from our council? Dan responded that there will be a public process, need to be expeditious and decisive. Great Lakes community needs to know what we want to do, build a bigger coalition of Great Lakes sanctuaries.

Jeff - Agency way can take anywhere from 9-12 months to 9-12 years. Would like to follow our model of the management plan review. In the next few weeks releasing public notice that we will be starting the process. Scoping meetings will be held in Rogers City, Harrisville, Alcona and Alpena. We will need the SAC's assistance to spread the word about the meetings.

Steve asked for an overview of the entire process? Jeff - Public hearings, documents, very similar to management plan process. Already have a whole list of support letters from folks on our website.

Action item in the management plan is that we will evaluate the recommendation that the working group made.

Ellen Brody said there is a difference between the management plan process and the expansion process. This will be more like the designation process with an Environmental Impact Statement and different proposals boundaries for the expansion. Alternative boundaries will be derived from the scoping meetings.

Olin asked for a one-page set of talking points from Jeff so we can make it clear when we are talking to our constituents.

Jeff proposed that we have another expansion working group. Steve Kroll made a motion to form a working group, Dennis Bodem seconded.

Steve Kroll, Chuck Wiesen, Joe Sobczak, Dennis Bodem, and John McConnell volunteered to be on the committee.

### **SANCUTARY UPDATE – Jeff Gray**

The Alpena Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner was an important night for the sanctuary. The theme of this year's dinner was "We would be sunk without our members." Thunder Bay NMS received the 2012 ACC Workforce Development Award.

Some of our key partners were also recognized – Alpena Shipwreck Tours received the Up and Coming Award up and was also nominated for Business of the Year. Last year the glass-bottom boat took out 8,500 passengers and we believe that will increase in the coming years. Chris and Missi LeFave won the Business of the Year for all of their businesses. Carol Shafto was awarded Citizen of the Year and the sanctuary was mentioned numerous times during her intro.

**Alpena Community College** – Our partnership with ACC continues to grow. Nine months ago when Dan was here and toured the college, he challenged them to design a memorial for individuals that have lost their lives working for NOAA, it will be at the Nancy Foster Center in the Florida Keys. Dan - The memorial is for people that lost their lives on the jobs and also for people that have made contributions to the concept of our special places. It is being designed by the art students at ACC and created out of concrete.

Dan invited Olin to go to the Savannah Ocean Exchange where entrepreneurs compete for \$100,000 sponsored by Gulfstream and Ocean Advance. Two of this year's finalists were concrete related. Last week, the finalists were in Alpena presenting on their concept of Ecocrete.

Ecocrete test sites have been deployed in the river behind the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center and they will return in June to do some work on the samples.

### **Marine Technology Program – ACC**

Received a grant to develop a marine technology program at ACC, training people for jobs in the Great Lakes, the ocean's and technology. Flyers for this have been distributed (see attached). The sanctuary staff will assist the college with teaching courses in underwater archaeology and diving.

Jeff traveled to the MATE center to see a program similar to this. Took a ton of information from that and tried to specialize our program. The summer program that was developed will be an incredible opportunity for students.

In the process of being finalized hope to have the official announcements within the next few weeks. Hoping to make the program unique in the nation, not just in our state. Jeff is working with American Samoa to bring a couple of their students here to attend some of the courses.

Alpena Regional Medical Center has been working with Samoa to help get a hyperbaric chamber, they will be opening their chamber in May. They also have a high diabetic rate like Alpena and the chamber will serve dual purposes.

### **Education & Outreach**

Sarah and the education team have done a great job going beyond the normal field trip.

Alpena High School will have an earth science elective class this spring. The *Shipwreck Alley* class will be taught by John Caplis. John said he had a full class and had to make a few exceptions to let more students participate. John received grant funding from the Besser Foundation for instructional materials for the class. Class will travel to the library to visit the research collection; they will go snorkeling, etc.

Elementary schools are working with the Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative. The program started at Sanborn and has grown to other area schools. The program involves the groups monitoring Thunder Bay River watershed.

The students in Bob Thompson's class at Sanborn learned about invasive species and how they might affect the shipwrecks. He does this project throughout the entire year. This year they are building an ROV which will be entered into the annual MATE ROV competition and will also be used for their watershed research. They are also interested in the reef restoration project. Exciting to see these kids involved in the community projects going on around them.

Besser Elementary school is working on the *City of Alpena* project, headed up by Chuck Wiesen. They are transcribing the log book and entering the information into a spreadsheet.

*Project Shiphunt* curriculum is being developed. High school lessons to compliment the film. John Caplis is the teacher liaison on that project. Hope to launch in June this year.

ACES Academy is writing a grant to have the Shipwreck Alley class as part of their curriculum.

Tall ship *Niagara* will be here this summer, July 7-9 and July 20-22.

Sarah introduced Daniel Moffat who is part of the Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative. He will work out of our offices and help us with sanctuary programs.

Planning on having two CILER fellows this summer.

Earth Day is coming up this spring, 450 students participated last year. Wild Swan Theater will be here, performing a play called *Shipwrecked*. The performance will be open to the public on Saturday.

ROV Competition – April 28, 2012. Twenty-nine teams signed up this year, which is twice as many as last year. Topic of this year's competition is "Shipwrecks, diving into history."

The month of May will be dedicated to daily school tours on board the *Lady Michigan*.

Working with Alpena Shipwreck Tours to add more interpretation on board. There will be a new schedule coming out to allow for more cruises. Working with Deb at the CVB to do more advertising this year. More details at the next meeting.

### **Research Update – Russ Green**

Total grant funding since 2005 is \$376k, if you include the TB Research collection \$476k, total \$852k.

## 2011 Research Summary

- 68 days at sea
- 324 dives by Thunder Bay NMS
- 60+ by dive partners
- 350+ dives by sea cadets
- 17 divers in TBNMS unit (6 are volunteers)
- 98 individuals came through Alpena for Thunder Bay related research.
- 208 individual nights in our research quarters, 55 nights in hotels, 15 nights in other accommodations. 278 total nights.
- Currently, 25 shipwreck sites have moorings, 4 were added in 2011. Will be installing some new moorings during the 2012 field season.
- Mapped 40 square miles off of Presque Isle and found 2 shipwrecks, the *M.F. Merrick* and the *Etruria*.
- Got images by working with volunteers and outside dive teams
- Worked on the steamer *Florida*, the *Typo* and the *Defiance*
- *Wreck Diving Magazine* featured an article written by a camera operator on *Project Shiphunt*
- Dove on prehistoric dive sites being studied by Jon O'Shea. University of Michigan will be here conducting a field school in May and June.
- Working on putting together all of the data we have collected through multibeam, etc., into a GIS system.
- 2012 – live dive from the *Grecian*. Work with school kids in North Carolina and Alpena.
- NOAA & the Preserve America Initiative- grant to map the *Pewabic* and install a mooring.

## ONMS DIRECTOR'S REPORT – *Daniel J. Basta*

Creating a national campaign, building larger coalitions. Every site has a role in this campaign. Every site has a projection element. Project in ways that are bigger and larger. Here in the Great Lakes the answer is simple. Every Great Lake needs to have a sanctuary.

Campaign is a very aggressive approach. The Sanctuary Leadership Team discussed this during their annual meeting and Jeff has his goals for our site and the Great Lakes. Great Lakes have an opportunity to build a bigger coalition, because they can tie together more rapidly than other parts of the country. We need to be creating momentum, getting corporate America to want to pay attention to certain places, which is very challenging.

Met with board last week and these are the 5 things he used to describe the state of the National Marine Sanctuary program:

- Strong
- Successful
- Active
- Leading
- On the attack

We have to build this so we have a bigger critical mass. Need to get communities in Colorado to see that their interest is the same as our interest. Vital to their special places as well.

Alpena will be the tech diving center for the program. We can use this to project to other communities.

Recent Sanctuary Watch focused on Maritime Heritage.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**ADJOURN**

Meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm.